sunrise through the windows

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by czache78

Summary

whipped this up for a writing contest thing (idk if I'll do it or not still lol) but i figured i would post it! If any wording is off its cause this had to be 500 words or less.

Basically, a little snippet of Todd's grief

The moment he wakes up, he knows something is wrong. The sun is just barely peeking through the shutters, the early-morning chirp of crickets outside penetrating what would otherwise be silence. Everything is just as normal.

Except for the empty bed across from him.

He sighs, rolling over in his bunk and staring at the ceiling. If he looks closely, a set of messy initials are carved into the corner; ghosts of years past immortalized in the brown wood. He presses a hand over his eyes.

He's done enough crying now to last a lifetime, though it seems like it'll never stop. Even as he drags himself out of bed and changes into real clothes, a tear-- well, a few-- well up in his eyes and he has to scrub, hard, to get rid of them.

The thing is, it's been a week. It's *only* been a week, and everyone is already moving on. He doesn't think he ever will.

Doesn't think he *can*.

Because how are you supposed to move on when your whole *life* never will?

They've already held the funeral. A schoolwide one, where they recited the motto and chanted the school song. *Everything he'd hate*, he remembers fondly, and he almost smiles, before he remembers the eulogies on top of eulogies and the echoey din of the Great Hall and his friend's shoulders shaking under his hands.

Stop.

The longer he thinks about it, the more pieces of whatever's left of his heart are ripped out as if by a pack of dogs out for blood. Raw and visceral and red. Seems fitting.

He closes his eyes and pauses with his hand on the doorknob. The first echoes of birdsong ring out through the half-open window, and he can't help but think back.

Climbing onto the roof.

Laughing there until the bell rang and they had to rush back down to make it to their classes.

Waking up to find him staring out the window, watching the sunrise in silence.

He swallows a gasp when someone knocks on the door in front of him, quiet and soft and so *different* from what he's used to. They're all grieving, in their own way.

“Come in,” he squeaks out. The door opens slowly, and there stands *his* friend since childhood. A shaky breath slips out of his throat. He’d always been scared he was intruding on their conversations, but now, there’s really no difference between them. Between any of them. *They all lost a friend.*

“How are you?”

He feels a gentle hand on his arm, and before he realizes he's crying, a thumb wipes his tears away. Something about these boys caring so much, caring so tenderly and truthfully, makes his feelings spill out, and before he knows it, he's sobbing into the rough fabric of a shirt collar. The boy in front of him doesn't seem to mind. He never has.

His heart may be torn in two, but someday, maybe, they can help rebuild it.

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